

Measurement of the τ lepton mass and an upper limit on the mass difference between τ^+ and τ^-

K. Belous,¹¹ M. Shapkin,¹¹ A. Sokolov,¹¹ K. Abe,⁷ K. Abe,⁴² I. Adachi,⁷ H. Aihara,⁴⁴
 D. Anipko,¹ K. Arinstein,¹ V. Aulchenko,¹ T. Aushev,^{17, 12} A. M. Bakich,³⁹ E. Barberio,²⁰
 A. Bay,¹⁷ I. Bedny,¹ U. Bitenc,¹³ I. Bizjak,¹³ S. Blyth,²³ A. Bondar,¹ A. Bozek,²⁶
 M. Bračko,^{7, 19, 13} T. E. Browder,⁶ M.-C. Chang,⁴ A. Chen,²³ K.-F. Chen,²⁵ W. T. Chen,²³
 B. G. Cheon,² R. Chistov,¹² Y. Choi,³⁸ Y. K. Choi,³⁸ S. Cole,³⁹ J. Dalseno,²⁰ A. Drutskoy,³
 S. Eidelman,¹ D. Epifanov,¹ S. Fratina,¹³ M. Fujikawa,²² N. Gabyshhev,¹ T. Gershon,⁷
 G. Gokhroo,⁴⁰ B. Golob,^{18, 13} H. Ha,¹⁵ J. Haba,⁷ Y. Hasegawa,³⁷ K. Hayasaka,²¹
 H. Hayashii,²² M. Hazumi,⁷ D. Heffernan,³¹ T. Hokuue,²¹ Y. Hoshi,⁴² S. Hou,²³
 W.-S. Hou,²⁵ T. Iijima,²¹ K. Ikado,²¹ A. Imoto,²² K. Inami,²¹ A. Ishikawa,⁴⁴ R. Itoh,⁷
 M. Iwasaki,⁴⁴ Y. Iwasaki,⁷ H. Kaji,²¹ J. H. Kang,⁴⁹ P. Kapusta,²⁶ N. Katayama,⁷
 T. Kawasaki,²⁸ H. R. Khan,⁴⁵ H. Kichimi,⁷ Y. J. Kim,⁵ P. Križan,^{18, 13} P. Krokovny,⁷
 R. Kulasiri,³ R. Kumar,³² C. C. Kuo,²³ A. Kuzmin,¹ Y.-J. Kwon,⁴⁹ J. Lee,³⁶ M. J. Lee,³⁶
 S. E. Lee,³⁶ T. Lesiak,²⁶ S.-W. Lin,²⁵ D. Liventsev,¹² G. Majumder,⁴⁰ F. Mandl,¹⁰
 T. Matsumoto,⁴⁶ A. Matyja,²⁶ S. McOnie,³⁹ H. Miyake,³¹ H. Miyata,²⁸ Y. Miyazaki,²¹
 R. Mizuk,¹² E. Nakano,³⁰ M. Nakao,⁷ H. Nakazawa,⁷ Z. Natkaniec,²⁶ S. Nishida,⁷
 O. Nitoh,⁴⁷ S. Ogawa,⁴¹ T. Ohshima,²¹ S. Okuno,¹⁴ S. L. Olsen,⁶ Y. Onuki,³⁴ H. Ozaki,⁷
 P. Pakhlov,¹² G. Pakhlova,¹² H. Park,¹⁶ K. S. Park,³⁸ R. Pestotnik,¹³ L. E. Piilonen,⁴⁸
 A. Poluektov,¹ Y. Sakai,⁷ N. Satoyama,³⁷ O. Schneider,¹⁷ J. Schümann,²⁴ R. Seidl,^{8, 34}
 K. Senyo,²¹ M. E. Sevior,²⁰ H. Shibuya,⁴¹ B. Shwartz,¹ J. B. Singh,³² A. Somov,³
 N. Soni,³² S. Stanič,²⁹ M. Starič,¹³ H. Stoeck,³⁹ S. Y. Suzuki,⁷ F. Takasaki,⁷ K. Tamai,⁷
 M. Tanaka,⁷ G. N. Taylor,²⁰ Y. Teramoto,³⁰ X. C. Tian,³³ I. Tikhomirov,¹² K. Trabelsi,⁷
 T. Tsuboyama,⁷ T. Tsukamoto,⁷ S. Uehara,⁷ T. Uglov,¹² K. Ueno,²⁵ S. Uno,⁷
 P. Urquijo,²⁰ Y. Usov,¹ G. Varner,⁶ S. Villa,¹⁷ A. Vinokurova,¹ C. H. Wang,²⁴
 Y. Watanabe,⁴⁵ E. Won,¹⁵ Q. L. Xie,⁹ B. D. Yabsley,³⁹ A. Yamaguchi,⁴³ Y. Yamashita,²⁷
 M. Yamauchi,⁷ Z. P. Zhang,³⁵ V. Zhilich,¹ V. Zhulanov,¹ and A. Zupanc¹³

(The Belle Collaboration)

¹*Budker Institute of Nuclear Physics, Novosibirsk*

²*Chonnam National University, Kwangju*

³*University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio 45221*

⁴*Department of Physics, Fu Jen Catholic University, Taipei*

⁵*The Graduate University for Advanced Studies, Hayama, Japan*

⁶*University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822*

⁷*High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK), Tsukuba*

⁸*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, Illinois 61801*

⁹*Institute of High Energy Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing*

¹⁰*Institute of High Energy Physics, Vienna*

¹¹*Institute of High Energy Physics, Protvino*

¹²*Institute for Theoretical and Experimental Physics, Moscow*

¹³*J. Stefan Institute, Ljubljana*
¹⁴*Kanagawa University, Yokohama*
¹⁵*Korea University, Seoul*
¹⁶*Kyungpook National University, Taegu*
¹⁷*Swiss Federal Institute of Technology of Lausanne, EPFL, Lausanne*
¹⁸*University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana*
¹⁹*University of Maribor, Maribor*
²⁰*University of Melbourne, Victoria*
²¹*Nagoya University, Nagoya*
²²*Nara Women's University, Nara*
²³*National Central University, Chung-li*
²⁴*National United University, Miao Li*
²⁵*Department of Physics, National Taiwan University, Taipei*
²⁶*H. Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics, Krakow*
²⁷*Nippon Dental University, Niigata*
²⁸*Niigata University, Niigata*
²⁹*University of Nova Gorica, Nova Gorica*
³⁰*Osaka City University, Osaka*
³¹*Osaka University, Osaka*
³²*Panjab University, Chandigarh*
³³*Peking University, Beijing*
³⁴*RIKEN BNL Research Center, Upton, New York 11973*
³⁵*University of Science and Technology of China, Hefei*
³⁶*Seoul National University, Seoul*
³⁷*Shinshu University, Nagano*
³⁸*Sungkyunkwan University, Suwon*
³⁹*University of Sydney, Sydney NSW*
⁴⁰*Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Bombay*
⁴¹*Toho University, Funabashi*
⁴²*Tohoku Gakuin University, Tagajo*
⁴³*Tohoku University, Sendai*
⁴⁴*Department of Physics, University of Tokyo, Tokyo*
⁴⁵*Tokyo Institute of Technology, Tokyo*
⁴⁶*Tokyo Metropolitan University, Tokyo*
⁴⁷*Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, Tokyo*
⁴⁸*Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061*
⁴⁹*Yonsei University, Seoul*

Abstract

The mass of the τ lepton has been measured in the decay mode $\tau \rightarrow 3\pi\nu_\tau$ using a pseudomass technique. The result obtained from 414 fb^{-1} of data collected with the Belle detector is $M_\tau = (1776.61 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.35(\text{sys.})) \text{ MeV}/c^2$. The upper limit on the relative mass difference between positive and negative τ leptons is $|M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-}|/M_\tau < 2.8 \times 10^{-4}$ at 90% confidence level.

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Masses of quarks and leptons are fundamental parameters of the Standard Model (SM). High precision measurements of the mass, lifetime and the leptonic branching fractions of the τ lepton can be used to test the lepton universality hypothesis embedded in the SM. The present PDG value of the τ mass [1] is dominated by the result of the BES Collaboration [2] and has an accuracy of about $0.3 \text{ MeV}/c^2$. The same level of accuracy in τ mass measurement was recently reported by the KEDR Collaboration [3]. The data collected by the Belle experiment allow a measurement with similar accuracy to the BES and KEDR experiments but with different systematic uncertainties; the latter experiments analyse the cross section for τ pair production near threshold while Belle measures the four-momenta of the visible τ decay products at a center-of-mass (c.m.) energy of $\sqrt{s} = 10.58 \text{ GeV}$. Eventually, by combining these high precision measurements, we will significantly improve the accuracy of the τ mass determination.

Separate measurements of the masses of the τ^+ and τ^- leptons in Belle, allow us to test the CPT theorem, which demands their equality. A similar test was previously performed by OPAL at LEP [4] with the result $(M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-})/M_\tau < 3.0 \times 10^{-3}$ at 90% CL.

To measure the τ mass, we use a pseudomass technique that was first employed by the ARGUS collaboration [5]. This technique relies on the reconstruction of the invariant mass and energy of the hadronic system in hadronic τ decays. The analysed variable is

$$M_{\min} = \sqrt{M_X^2 + 2(E_{\text{beam}} - E_X)(E_X - P_X)}, \quad (1)$$

which is less than or equal to the τ lepton mass. Here M_X , E_X and P_X are the invariant mass, energy and absolute value of the momentum, respectively, of the hadronic system in e^+e^- c.m. frame, and E_{beam} is the energy of the electron (or positron) in this frame. In the absence of initial and final state radiation and assuming a perfect measurement of the four-momentum of the hadronic system, the distribution of M_{\min} extends up to and has a sharp edge at M_τ . Initial (ISR) and final (FSR) state radiation as well as the finite momentum resolution of the detector smear this edge. We can use the edge position from a fit to the experimental M_{\min} distribution as an estimator of the τ mass, since the background processes in the selected $\tau^+\tau^-$ sample have a featureless M_{\min} distribution near M_τ .

The analysis presented here is based on 414 fb^{-1} of data taken at the $\Upsilon(4S)$ resonance ($\sqrt{s} = 10.58 \text{ GeV}$) with the Belle detector at the KEKB asymmetric-energy e^+e^- collider [6]. A detailed description of the Belle detector is given elsewhere [7]. We mention here only the detector components essential for the present analysis.

Charged tracks are reconstructed from hit information in a central drift chamber (CDC) located in a 1.5 T solenoidal magnetic field. The z axis of the detector and the solenoid are aligned antiparallel to the positron beam. Track trajectory coordinates of the charged particles near the collision point are provided by a silicon vertex detector (SVD). Photon detection and energy measurement are performed with a CsI(Tl) electromagnetic calorimeter (ECL). Identification of charged particles is based on the information from the time-of-flight counters (TOF) and silica aerogel Cherenkov counters (ACC). The ACC provides good separation between kaons and pions or muons at momenta above 1.2 GeV. The TOF system consists of a barrel of 128 plastic scintillation counters, and is effective in K/π separation mainly for tracks with momentum below 1.2 GeV. The lower energy tracks are also identified using specific ionization (dE/dx) measurements in the CDC. Electrons are identified by combining information from the ECL, ACC, TOF and CDC [8]. The magnet return yoke is instrumented to form the K_L and muon detector (KLM), which detects muon tracks [9] and provides trigger signals. The responses from these detectors determine the likelihood

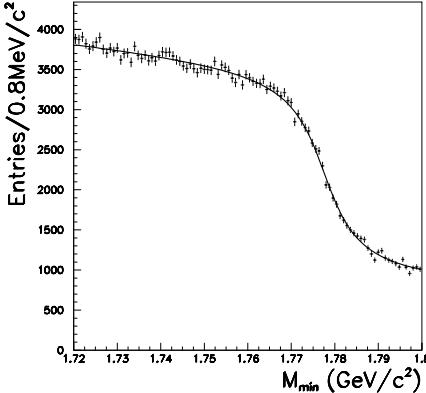


FIG. 1: The pseudomass distribution M_{\min} for the $\tau^\pm \rightarrow 3\pi^\pm \nu_\tau$ candidates. The points with error bars are data and the solid line is the result of the fit with the function (2).

L_i of particle type $i \in \{e, \mu, \pi, K, p\}$. A charged particle is identified as an electron if the corresponding likelihood ratio [8], $P_e > 0.9$ or if the electron mass hypothesis has the highest probability. The electron efficiency for $P_e > 0.9$ is approximately 90% for a single electron embedded into a hadronic event. Charged particles are identified as muons if the corresponding muon likelihood ratio [9] $P_\mu > 0.8$. The muon detection efficiency for this measurement is approximately 91%. The corresponding likelihood ratio cut for kaons and protons is 0.8. The kaon and proton identification efficiencies are about 80%. All charged tracks that are not identified as an electron, muon, kaon or proton are treated as pions. The K_S^0 candidates are formed from pairs of charged tracks intersecting in a secondary vertex more than 0.3 cm from the beam spot in the plane transverse to the beam axis; the χ^2 of the vertex fit is required to be less than 11 and the $\pi^+\pi^-$ invariant mass of the candidate is required to be $0.48 \text{ GeV}/c^2 < M_{\pi^+\pi^-} < 0.52 \text{ GeV}/c^2$. The π^0 candidates are formed from pairs of photons, each with energy greater than 0.1 GeV, that satisfy the condition $0.115 \text{ GeV}/c^2 < M_{\gamma\gamma} < 0.152 \text{ GeV}/c^2$.

We select events that have one τ lepton decaying leptonically into $l\bar{\nu}_l\nu_\tau$ and the other into three charged pions and neutrino. For the entire event, we require three charged pions and one lepton (either muon or electron) with net charge equal to zero. The number of charged kaons, protons, K_S^0 mesons and π^0 mesons should be equal to zero." After applying all selection criteria 5.8×10^6 events remain.

The M_{\min} distribution for the $\tau \rightarrow 3\pi\nu_\tau$ data is shown in Fig. 1. A fit was performed to these data with the empirical edge function

$$F(x) = (P_3 + P_4x)\arctan((x - P_1)/P_2) + P_5 + P_6x, \quad (2)$$

where P_i are parameters of the fit. The fit range 1.72 – $1.80 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ is chosen. The value of the uncorrected τ mass estimator, P_1 , obtained from the fit is $P_1 = 1777.77 \pm 0.13 \text{ MeV}/c^2$.

To obtain the value of the τ mass from the τ mass estimator P_1 we use several Monte Carlo samples of $\tau^+\tau^-$ events where one τ decays leptonically and the other one decays into three charged pions and neutrino. The KORALB generator [10] is used for the Monte Carlo $e^+e^- \rightarrow \tau^+\tau^-$ event production.

We use three different Monte Carlo samples with input τ masses equal to $1777.0 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, $1776.0 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ and $1776.8 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ for the first, second and third sample, respectively. The statistics of each sample is approximately equal to that of the data. The differences

between the fitted estimator P_1 and the input τ mass for these samples are $\Delta_1 = (1.27 \pm 0.12) \text{ MeV}/c^2$, $\Delta_2 = (1.29 \pm 0.05) \text{ MeV}/c^2$ and $\Delta_3 = (1.06 \pm 0.04) \text{ MeV}/c^2$ for the first, second and third sample, respectively. To convert the τ mass estimator P_1 to M_τ , we use the weighted mean and dispersion of Δ_1 , Δ_2 , and Δ_3 to obtain the estimator correction $\bar{\Delta} = (1.16 \pm 0.14) \text{ MeV}/c^2$.

The subtraction of this value from the edge position parameter P_1 in data gives $M_\tau = 1776.61 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.14(\text{MC}) \text{ MeV}/c^2$, where MC means the error due to limited Monte Carlo statistics.

To study the systematic uncertainty due to the choice of the edge parameterization, we use the following alternate functions:

$$F_1(x) = (P_3 + P_4x) \frac{x - P_1}{\sqrt{P_2 + (x - P_1)^2}} + P_5 + P_6x, \quad (3)$$

$$F_2(x) = (P_3 + P_4x) \frac{-1}{1 + \exp((x - P_1)/P_2)} + P_5 + P_6x \quad (4)$$

for the fit to the M_{\min} distribution. Here P_i are the parameters of the fit.

The above procedure for τ mass extraction is repeated sucessively for the data and MC samples with each of these functions. The extracted values for the τ mass obtained with the functions (3) and (4) are $(1776.85 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.12(\text{MC})) \text{ MeV}/c^2$ and $(1776.52 \pm 0.12(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.10(\text{MC})) \text{ MeV}/c^2$, respectively.

We take for the measured value of the τ mass the one obtained using function (2):

$$M_\tau = M_1 = 1776.61 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \text{ MeV}/c^2 \quad (5)$$

The square root of the variance of the obtained τ masses, $0.18 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ is taken as systematic uncertainty due to the choice of the edge parameterization. This value exceeds the error of $0.14 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, which is assigned as a systematic uncertainty due to limited Monte Carlo statistics. The use of a different fit range gives a much smaller shift in τ mass of $0.04 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, which we include in the systematic uncertainty.

In this analysis, we use the beam energy calibrated using the beam-energy constrained mass of fully reconstructed B decays on a run-by-run basis. We estimate the uncertainty of the beam energy to be less than 1.5 MeV , which includes the uncertainty of B mass, tracking system calibration and the effect of the $\Upsilon(4S)$ width. Using the Monte Carlo samples, we find that this uncertainty propagates to a systematic uncertainty on the τ mass of $0.26 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ under the assumption that the value 1.5 MeV is fully due to uncertainty of the beam energy calibration.

As a cross-check of the result obtained from the fully reconstructed B decays we analyse the distribution of the variable $\Delta_{ME} = (M(\mu^+\mu^-) - 2E_{\text{beam}})$ for $e^+e^- \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$ data events. If a systematic shift exists in the beam energy or tracking system calibration, we would expect some shift of the maximum of this distribution from zero. A small shift of the maximum of the Δ_{ME} distribution from zero is due to ISR and FSR. We fit the Δ_{ME} distribution to a sum of two Gaussians with the same central value multiplied by a cubic polynomial to take into account the peak asymmetry due to ISR. To check the consistency of this fitting procedure, we apply it to Monte Carlo $e^+e^- \rightarrow \mu^+\mu^-$ events with ISR and FSR [11] that pass through the full Belle simulation and reconstruction procedures. The Δ_{ME} distributions for data and Monte Carlo are shown in Fig. 2 together with results of the fit. The reduced goodness-of-fit values χ^2/Ndf are 0.9 and 1.06 for the data and Monte Carlo, respectively, where $Ndf = 51$ is the number of degrees of freedom.

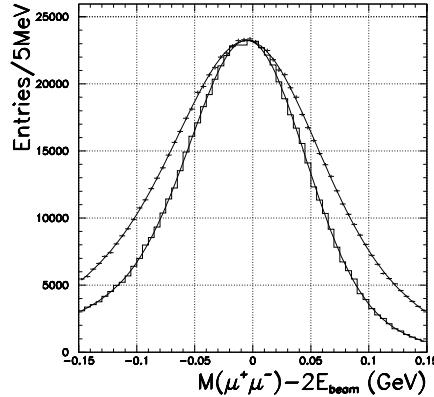


FIG. 2: The $(M(\mu^+\mu^-) - 2E_{\text{beam}})$ distributions for the data (points with errors) and Monte Carlo (histogram without errors). The curves show the results of the fit to the data and Monte Carlo by the sum of two Gaussians multiplied by a cubic polynomial.

While the resolution of the Δ_{ME} variable is not well described by Monte Carlo, the peak position coincides for data and simulation. To estimate the systematics due to the difference in momentum resolution between data and Monte Carlo we included additional smearing of the track momenta in the Monte Carlo samples by a Gaussian with $\sigma = 1.02 \cdot 10^{-3} p^2$ (the units of σ and p are GeV/c). The consistency in Δ_{ME} between data and Monte Carlo becomes much better after this procedure. The shift in the edge position parameter P_1 is negligible (less than $0.02 \text{ MeV}/c^2$) and is included in total systematics.

The difference between data and Monte Carlo peak positions obtained from the fit is $\delta\Delta_{ME} = 3 \pm 2 \text{ MeV}$. This difference comes from the imperfect calibration of both the beam energy and tracking system. We analyse two extreme cases when the shift $\delta\Delta_{ME}$ is due to the imperfect calibration of either 1) the beam energy or 2) the tracking system.

For the first case, we have $\Delta E_{\text{beam}} = \delta\Delta_{ME}/2 = 1.5 \text{ MeV}$, which is consistent with accuracy of the beam energy calibration obtained from the reconstruction of the exclusive B decays. To estimate the shift of the τ mass for the second case, we construct the M_{\min} Monte Carlo distributions for an input τ mass equal to $1777.0 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ for unmodified pion momenta and for momenta shifted by $\Delta p/p = \pm 3/10580 = 2.8 \times 10^{-4}$. We obtain a mass shift in the range $0.10\text{--}0.15 \text{ MeV}/c^2$, which is smaller than the shift observed when $\delta\Delta_{ME}$ includes the full beam energy uncertainty ($0.26 \text{ MeV}/c^2$). We take this conservative assumption and assume a systematic uncertainty due to the combined imperfections of the beam energy and tracking system calibration of $0.26 \text{ MeV}/c^2$.

To estimate the systematic uncertainty due to the model dependence of the spectrum of the 3π system in the τ decay we vary the mass and width of the $a_1(1260)$ meson in the range $\pm 300 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ from the nominal PDG values. We find the shift in the edge position due to this variation to be negligible (less than $0.02 \text{ MeV}/c^2$).

Systematic uncertainties from misidentified τ decay products and from non- $\tau^+\tau^-$ events are negligible (less than $0.01 \text{ MeV}/c^2$), since their M_{\min} distributions show no significant structure in the region of the τ mass.

The list of the analysed sources of systematics is given in Table I. The final result is $M_\tau = (1776.61 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.35(\text{sys.})) \text{ MeV}/c^2$. In the analysis we assume that the neutrino mass is equal to zero. According to MC, a change in the neutrino mass from zero to $10 \text{ MeV}/c^2$ leads to a shift in the edge position of the pseudomass distribution by -0.1

TABLE I: Summary of systematic uncertainties

Source of systematics	$\sigma, \text{ MeV}/c^2$
Beam energy and tracking system	0.26
Edge parameterization	0.18
Limited MC statistics	0.14
Fit range	0.04
Momentum resolution	0.02
Model of $\tau \rightarrow 3\pi\nu_\tau$	0.02
Background	0.01
Total	0.35

MeV/c^2 .

The pseudomass method allows a separate measurement of the masses of the positively and negatively charged τ leptons. A mass difference between positive and negative τ leptons would result in a difference in the energy between the τ 's produced in the e^+e^- collision. This in principle makes the assumption $E_\tau = E_{\text{beam}}$ invalid. The M_{\min} distributions for positive and negative τ 's decaying into $3\pi\nu_\tau$ are shown in Fig. 3 together with the results of the fit.

Good agreement is found between the distributions for τ^+ and τ^- . The mass difference obtained from independent fits to these distributions is $M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-} = (0.05 \pm 0.23) \text{ MeV}/c^2$.

Most sources of systematic uncertainty on τ mass affect positive and negative τ leptons equally, so that their contributions to the mass difference (and its uncertainty) cancel. One exception is different interactions of particles and antiparticles in the detector material. For example, the numbers of positive and negative triplets for the selected pions are not equal to each other. However, the description of this difference by the MC is reasonably accurate. In the data the ratio of the number of negative to number of positive triplets is 1.034 while in MC this ratio is equal to 1.031. To estimate a systematic shift in the mass difference between τ^+ and τ^- we compare the peak positions of $\Lambda_c \rightarrow pK^-\pi^+$ and $\bar{\Lambda}_c \rightarrow \bar{p}K^+\pi^-$, $D^+ \rightarrow \phi(1020)\pi^+$ and $D^- \rightarrow \phi(1020)\pi^-$, $D_s^+ \rightarrow \phi(1020)\pi^+$ and $D_s^- \rightarrow \phi(1020)\pi^-$. The average relative mass shift from the decay modes listed above is approximately 0.8×10^{-4} . This value is used as the systematic uncertainty in the relative mass difference between τ^+ and τ^- and corresponds to a systematic uncertainty in the mass difference of 0.14 MeV/c^2 .

Adding the statistical and systematic errors in quadrature, we obtain $M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-} = (0.05 \pm 0.27) \text{ MeV}/c^2$. This result can be expressed as an upper limit on the relative mass difference [12] $|M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-}|/M_\tau < 2.8 \times 10^{-4}$ at 90% CL. Good agreement of the M_{\min} distributions for positive and negative $\tau \rightarrow 3\pi\nu_\tau$ decays shows that CPT invariance is respected at the present level of experimental accuracy.

To summarize, we have measured the mass of the τ lepton from the pseudomass distribution of τ decays into three charged pions and a neutrino. The result is

$$M_\tau = (1776.61 \pm 0.13(\text{stat.}) \pm 0.35(\text{sys.})) \text{ MeV}/c^2,$$

in good agreement with the current world average and of comparable accuracy. Independent measurements of the positive and negative τ mass are obtained to test CPT symmetry. The measured values are consistent and an upper limit on the relative mass difference is

$$|M_{\tau^+} - M_{\tau^-}|/M_\tau < 2.8 \times 10^{-4} \text{ at 90\% CL},$$

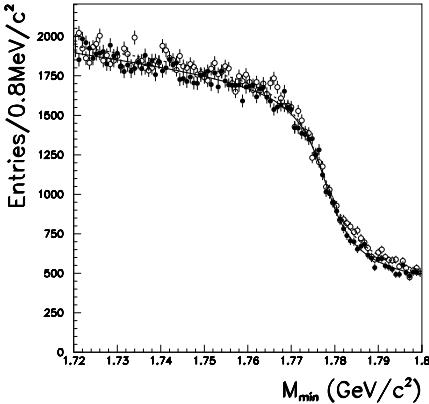


FIG. 3: The distribution of the pseudomass M_{\min} for the decay $\tau \rightarrow 3\pi^\pm \nu_\tau$, shown separately for positively and negatively charged τ decays. The solid points with error bars correspond to τ^+ decays, while the open points with error bars are τ^- decays. The solid curve is the result of the fit to the pseudomass distribution of τ^+ with function (2) while the dashed one is for the τ^- .

one order of magnitude better than the previous limit from OPAL.

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